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THE SILVER AGE. A Dramatic Poem by Arthur E. J. Legge. London: John Lane, the Bodley Head. New York: John Lane Company. 1911.

The most obvious comment to be made concerning *The Silver Age* is that it lacks many of the elements essential to either a great drama or a great poem. It is dramatic only in form; quite apart from the question of unities, it is in large measure devoid of the twofold interest of character and action that we expect in even the simplest narrative. The leading characters are frankly types rather than individuals and thereby lose in personal appeal. Moreover, they are not as a rule admirable types; however much we may respect them as theorists, reformers, or seekers after truth, they do not win our unreserved sympathy or complete moral approbation. Such action as the poem possesses is spasmodic rather than sustained, and one cannot help imagining, closet drama though this is, how an audience would yawn were actors to attempt to interest them in such "dust of exposition." Indeed, it is the large predominance of this expository element that makes *The Silver Age* essentially unpoetical. Its theme as propounded by Goodwin is: How can this present Silver Age be made an age of Gold? The answers are varied. Gwendolen is an ardent advocate of feminine domination in the affairs of life; Aubrey believes in a more complete democracy; Arval advocates the destruction of existing conditions and beliefs and an application to the race of the principle of selection of the fittest; Clare presents the vision of an ideal socialism; while Jube emphasizes the burning socialistic hatred of wealth, aristocracy, and class-government. It is Vane, the Minor Prophet, whose philosophy of life is first presented, is kept constantly before us, and is made in the end to triumph gloriously. He himself finds difficulty in formulating his belief; he says,—

I hold that we
Are masters of our fortune, and inhabit,
Beyond all time, the eternal age of Gold,
Have we but courage.

Later we learn that this courage involves such ideals as individual responsibility, unshaken fidelity to the cause of truth, disregard of worldly success, unbounded human sympathy, and, as the key-note, unhesitating sacrifice of self. Now the battle of

these conflicting theories with one another and with the world has a decided intellectual interest but surely the *sermo pedestris* is best fitted to present it; the pennons of poetry seem hopelessly weighted down by this expository burden.

Yet, despite these obvious limitations, *The Silver Age* brings intellectual pleasure to the reader and wins from him no little admiration. On the whole, the blank verse is polished and stately, and passage after passage is characterized by a wonderful aptness of phrase. In *Miriam*, the seeker after truth, one feels a real personal interest, apart from interest in the type, and this feeling is greatly intensified by the fact that she is a seeker for love as well as truth. The last scene of the poem is indeed masterly; here *Miriam* finds the love of *Vane* and learns the truth of self-sacrifice, here *Vane* loses his life in the practice of his doctrine, and here *Miriam* dismisses us with words that typify the major intellectual and minor emotional appeals of the poem.

Leave him and me to silence for a while!
 If great love win prerogative, I claim
 Possession here. He gave me partnership
 In a deep secret, I shall tell the world,
 Till its deaf ears be opened, and it break
 Chains that now throttle it. But my heart must pay
 Tribute of all remaining earthly dreams,
 Before I journey on. So pardon me!

(*Godwin* and *Aubrey* move slowly away, while she crouches on the ground beside the body of *Vane*.)

C. M. NEWMAN.

THE TRINITY. By the Rev. Francis J. Hall, D.D. New York: Longmans, Green, & Company.

This volume, the fourth in Dr. Hall's valuable series, "Dogmatic Theology," is an attempt to present in systematic form the fundamental Christian belief touching the Divine 'tri-personality.' The author's strength lies in the clearness and logical sequence of his thought, and in his power of systematizing; yet in this very process of systematizing, as it seems to us, something is sacrificed. The danger is that certain phases of truth which were developed in a long and gradual process of theological evolution be either overlooked or else inadequately